

In Oregon and Washington, water is everywhere you look. You can go to the local beach and see miles of ocean. Water is on the roads, in fields and in gutters across these two states almost all year, because of rainfall. Turning on the news or flipping through a world magazine there are stories of physical and economic water scarcity in countries all over the world, and even as close as the US and Mexico. The reality is that almost half of the population doesn't have water piped to their homes. Getting involved with the water scarcity is easy, and more people need to get involved to save lives.

I have been around water my whole life. Being born and raised on the Oregon Coast does that to you. The students in my school don't take a second look when the sky grays over. Our sports practices aren't cancelled because of rain. We just put on an extra layer of clothing and deal. In the summers we head to the local swimming spot and spend the day playing in the water or sunbathing. When the day is done we head home and take a long hot shower. Water is available to us at anytime. We drink it, cook with it, shower with it and water our plants and yard, with water.

In what seems to be another world and lifetime, over three million people die from health problems from water each year. Some women have to walk on average almost four miles in order to get water for their family. And compared to the United State's daily water use of 100 gallons, some of the poorest countries live on less than five, according to National Geographic. About 90% of wastewater in these countries is being put back into the rivers and streams untreated. This is causing the land to become unhealthy and unable to support food growth.

There are a few groups out there dedicated to getting these people the water that they need to live. One way to help is drilling new and fixing existing wells, wells could possibly be drilled closer to villages. Installing water pumps would help the scarcity, as could water treatment solutions. One solution offered separates drinkable water from the dirt, thus giving them clean water and usable dirt. Training those in need is also important so that when help leaves.

People all over the world will continue to die because of unhealthy water or lack of water if nothing is done. It is important to support the efforts of those who are already making a difference and saving lives. Humans can live weeks and sometimes even a few months without food, but only between one or two weeks without water. Water is a necessity for human life, and no one should be denied that right simply because of where they are born or where they live.